Documentary Film Reflection Worksheet

Make sure to read these questions before you start watching the film. After the movie is over, return to this worksheet then answer the questions in the space provided. Make sure to answer each question thoroughly, using complete sentences as appropriate for most answers.

1. Provide some basic information about the film: Title, producer/film company, and year. Briefly summarize the purpose and subject of the film.

"Freedom Riders" is a documentary film that provides a historical account of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the early 1960s. The film focuses on a group of civil rights activists known as the "Freedom Riders," who were both Black and white individuals dedicated to the segregation and racism in the South. Their primary mission was to ride interstate buses and test the Supreme Court's rulings banning segregation in interstate travel facilities. It sheds light on their nonviolent protests and the impact they had on the civil rights struggle. "Freedom Riders" shows the importance of civil disobedience and activism in the fight for racial equality and justice in America.

1. Identify the people, places, and events as well as the aspects of people, society, or nature that

the film explores.

Shows the lives of civil rights activists, such as John Lewis and Diane Nash, as they were on their journey through the Southern United States. It shows the bus terminals and stations in places like Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, where these activists confronted violence from white supremacists and police. It also explores the legal battles and challenges that emerged as a result of the Freedom Rides, including court cases and the involvement of federal authorities.

1. List four facts described in the film that impressed—good or bad—and explain how each fact develops the film’s premise or theme.

The film describes the extreme violence faced by the Freedom Riders, emphasizing the severity of their mission and their commitment to challenging racial injustice through peaceful means. The Freedom Riders remained committed to nonviolence, highlighting the moral strength of their cause and the potential of peaceful resistance. The film shows the involvement of the federal government, particularly the Kennedy administration, showing the importance of national attention and government action in addressing civil rights issues. "Freedom Riders" also shows the collaboration between Black and white activists, illustrating how people from diverse backgrounds came together to challenge segregation, highlighting the film's theme of unity as a big part in fighting racism and civil rights.

1. Describe an aspect of the film that showed you something you hadn’t known about before, caused you to think in a new way, or helped you to understand something more deeply. How did this aspect of the film change your thinking?

One part that impacted me was the personal stories of the activists themselves. Hearing firsthand accounts of the physical and emotional toll they went through during their nonviolent protests brought the reality of the Civil Rights Movement to life in a way that history books and movies could not. It made me empathize with their struggles on a deeper level and understand the courage it took to challenge the system of segregation. This part of the film changed my thinking by humanizing the activists and highlighting the personal sacrifices they made for justice and equality

1. Describe methods (rhetorical choices) the film use to help create a certain mood or tone or to help develop the film’s themes. You may want to consider the visual and auditory elements.

The film sets its mood and tone by using historical visuals and personal interviews. The old footage and images create a serious atmosphere, while the interviews with surviving Freedom Riders make the historical events relatable. The film's choice of music, like gospel and protest songs, adds emotional depth, aligning with the Civil Rights Movement.

1. Was there anything in the film that you found unconvincing or that you thought needed more support?

The film did a good job conveying the personal experiences of the Freedom Riders and captivated viewers in the historical period. It used powerful visuals and firsthand interviews to create a compelling narrative.